

Brinegar Cabin
Blue Ridge Parkway
Wilkes County
North Carolina

HABS No. NC-188

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington 25, D. C.

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BRINEGAR CABIN

Mile 238.5 on Blue Ridge Parkway, ^{WILKES} ~~Alleghany~~ County, North Carolina
(6 miles south of Sparta)

Physical Data

Present Owner: National Park Service

Present Occupant and Use: May through October the Chatham Manufacturing Company of Elkin, N.C., is authorized by terms of a revocable concession permit to use and occupy Brinegar Cabin to present a live interpretive exhibit of mountain textile craft by furnishing a home-made loom and related items, materials for its operation, and operators capable of explaining their craft to park visitors; and to maintain a sales outlet for hand-manufactured or homespun textiles or related articles of the type approved by the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, Inc.

Description (Present Condition)

Wall Construction: Dovetailed log frame, without chinking, covered with siding.

Size and Form: Rectangular 25'8" x 19'0".

Number Stories: 1 story, with loft.

Rear Porch: Across rear, one story, wood floor.

Exterior Openings: Windows: Four double hung; one window has three lights in lower sash and six in upper; other three have two lights lower and four lights upper sash.

Exterior Openings: Front Door: 3'0" x 5'10" vertical boards with cleats.
Rear Door: 2'8" x 5'10" vertical boards with cleats.

Roofing: Hand rived board shingles on pole (3" - 4" diameter) rafters.

Chimneys: Two, made of field stone laid in clay mortar.

Interior (Extremely simple.)

Floors: Oak boards 8" to 9" wide, 1" thick.

Walls: 3/4" pine boards 3" - 9" wide, horizontal on walls.

Ceiling: Exposed floor joists of loft.

Stairways: Crude ladder to loft.

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Additions and Alterations: Shakes on the roof have been replaced and the rear porch was replaced. The cabin was wired for use by the Chatham Manufacturing Company.

Outbuildings: The storage house and spring house are still standing.

Historical Data

Year of erection: 1885.

Built by: Martin Brinegar

Original Intended Use: Residence.

Notable events and occupants:

Martin Brinegar and his wife Caroline "settled" on Brinegar Cabin site about 1880 and started developing the farm lands. Like their neighbors they were self-sufficient and lived off their farm. It was in such an isolated section of the mountains that 55 years later when the Blue Ridge Parkway was begun there still was no road to the Brinegar homesite - the nearest was a half mile away! When Caroline Brinegar was approached about selling her land for the Blue Ridge Parkway, she just laughed and said it wasn't possible for a modern road to go right in front of her door where there hadn't been a road all those years.

She wove cloth for the family on an old 4-poster loom, similar to the one now used in the cabin for demonstration purposes. Martin died in 1925, and Caroline continued to live on the place until it was purchased for the National Park Service in 1937.

Brinegar Cabin is typical of pioneer mountain dwellings found in the Blue Ridge. It is a surviving trace of a culture that lasted a century or so, little-changed, until roads and automobiles brought the Twentieth Century into the mountain fastness. Now the homespun arts and manners of the mountaineer are disappearing from the scene.

Prepared by

Edward H. Abbuchl
Edward H. Abbuchl

May 27, 1959

Supervising Park Landscape Architect
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction

Dick Sullivan July 9, 1959.
chief architect.